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REFORMED PROTESTANT DUTCH  
CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA





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HISTORICAL DISCOURSE,

BY

REV. W. J. R. TAYLOR.

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The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church  
IN PHILADELPHIA.

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AN

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

BY

WILLIAM J. R. TAYLOR,

MINISTER OF THE THIRD R. D. C., PHILADELPHIA.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE

CONSISTORY AND TRUSTEES OF SAID CHURCH.

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TO THE  
CONSISTORY, TRUSTEES AND CONGREGATION  
OF THE  
THIRD REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH  
IN PHILADELPHIA,  
THIS DISCOURSE IS RESPECTFULLY

*Dedicated,*

BY THEIR ATTACHED PASTOR,  
THE AUTHOR.

PHILADELPHIA, MARCH, 1857.



## P R E F A C E.

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THIS discourse was substantially delivered to the people of the author's pastoral charge, on the morning and afternoon of Sabbath January 25th, 1857. It is now printed, with such alterations and additions as were necessary to give it more unity and completeness. The large space assigned to the history of the Third Church, is accounted for by the fact that the discourse was intended to commemorate its entrance upon the twenty-first year of its existence, as an established Church. But it was thought that more good might be done by including some brief outline sketches of the rise and progress of the denomination in this city. It has been a labour of love to gather the fragments which have been wrought into this very imperfect production; especially as many of them have been procured from the lips of venerable friends and lovers of our Church, who cannot long remain with us. The author has been principally indebted to the manuscript records of his own Church, the Minutes of the General Synod, the Magazine of the Reformed Dutch Church, "A Memorial of Rev. Jacob Brodhead, D.D.," Rev. Dr. C. C. Cuyler's Sermon on the death of Rev. Dr. Gilbert, R. Livingston, Rev. Dr. Wyckoff's Address at the

funeral of Rev. Brogun Hoff, Rev. Dr. Berg's Farewell Words, A Sermon on the Death of Rev. Henry G. Livingston, by the undersigned, and a few other fugitive productions. The facts contained in the tribute to the memory of Governor Buchanan, have been drawn from Rev. Dr. Alexander's History of African Colonization, and the publications of the Colonization Society. It is not a little remarkable, that the memoir of such a man has yet to be written, and that his grave lies still uncovered by a simple marble.

The principles and illustrations of the preliminary discussion, may at least, prove encouraging to those who are engaged in the good, but arduous and often heart-trying work of building up new churches. And if these suggestions should help any reader to take proper scriptural views of the "high vocation" of even the feeblest Church of Christ, it will not be labour in vain. With these remarks, the discourse is committed to the press, in the hope that it may subserve the interests of the Master's kingdom, and stimulate us all to a nobler and more effective service.

W. J. R. T.

## DISCOURSE.

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1 Samuel vii. 12.

“THEN SAMUEL TOOK A STONE, AND SET IT UP BETWEEN MIZPEH AND SHEN, AND CALLED THE NAME OF IT EBENEZER, SAYING, HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US.”

WHILE Israel was engaged in the solemnities of a day of fasting and humiliation, their old enemies, the Philistines, made a descent upon them. Fearful and unarmed, they betook themselves to the God of battles, and in answer to the cries of their venerable prophet, who was “offering up the burnt offering,” when “the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel,” “the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel.” “Then Samuel took a stone, and set it up between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.” The sequel is briefly told. “So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel; and the hand of the Lord

was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel."

I will not detain you in discussing the propriety of such monumental records of great events. The instincts of the human heart approve it—the history of our race has sanctioned it. The simple stone which Jacob set up and anointed, and changed from the pillow of his weary head into the memorial pillow of his vision at Bethel; and the heap of stones, from the bed of the Jordan, which Joshua set up at Gilgal, to commemorate his miraculous passage of its floods; and the "Ebenezer"—*the Stone of Help*—which Samuel set up at Mizpeh—are all more eloquent to us, in their rude simplicity, than if they had towered like the pyramids, or been covered with most exquisite sculptures of a Grecian chisel.

Here was a public, formal, solemn acknowledgment of the wondrous interposition of Providence, in a time of great danger and trial. It was connected with devout religious services; and has all the aspects of a most pious act. It expresses the idea of the attainment of a resting-place after a season of exer-

tion—the arrival at a stage of a journey—a pause in national and church affairs—a stopping-place from whence to look forward, and backward, and around. It is the acknowledgment of Divine help, thus far, and the signal of hope for the future. And God speaks to us as he did by Jeremiah to Ephriam: “SET THEE UP WAY-MARKS, *make thee high heaps ; set thy heart toward the highway—EVEN THE WAY WHICH THOU WENTEST.*” (Jer. xxxi. 21.)

This is what we propose doing at this time. This Church, in the twenty-first year of its existence, has arrived at just one of those places, where it is her duty and joy to review her history, and forecast her prospects ; to acknowledge what her God has done for her, and take heart for the future. Here then let us set up our STONE of HELP—and say, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”

I. Let us apply these principles *to the formal associated character* in which we appear before men, angels, and God, at this time.—“Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.” And *who are we ? In what capacity* do we set up our “Stone of Help,” and acknowledge God’s mercies toward us ? Need I say, brethren,



that we claim to be, and humbly believe that we constitute a portion of “the Holy Catholic Church”—that “Church which Christ loved, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that he might present it unto himself, a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” (Eph. v. 25.) This alone should make us a monumental Church—tracing her origin, and life, and end to her glorious Head.

Let us set out with this principle in full view:—*Every new religious movement, and especially every organization of a Christian Church, constitutes an important era in the history of any community, and even of the world, and of its redemption.*

We are but too apt to regard such movements as having a merely local interest—as designed for the benefit of a few—reaching no farther than the little village, or city, or circle of individuals immediately affected by its operations. Men actually seem to look down upon the labours of the sabbath school—the tract visiters—the colporteur—a mission to the heathen—or the formation of a



Church on the Western prairies, or even in our cities, as among the inferior things of Zion. And then they begin to talk about *the too many calls*; (three-fourths of which they systematically reject,) or they may even dare to take up Israel's wicked excuse: "*The time is not come—the time that the Lord's house should be built.*" Let us brand these ideas as the utterances of ignorance and prejudice, most deplorable, or of covetousness, most damnable. Local!—merely local! Yes, perhaps in their origin; but in their influences just as local as the Cross, which has made one of Jerusalem's insignificant hills the moral centre of the intelligent universe. Consider, for a moment, the august grandeur of the organization of this once infant Church, as seen in the light of the splendid purpose of the Cross of Christ. The few friends of our Lord, who started this enterprise, did it, I know, in faith, and hope, and prayer. They did it for the sake of Jesus, and of the thousands who are swelling our city's annual growth. It was constituted a Church in the name of God the Father, of God the Son, and of God the Holy Ghost, before human specta-

tors, and the cloud of witnesses in yonder heaven; and before that Great White Throne. From that moment, its name was “graven on the palms” of the Redeemer’s hands. Its beginnings were silent as the gatherings of the clouds; its issues have already been fertilizing as their gentle showers. It started then a train of consecrated influences, which will run on to the Judgment-day, and parallel with the eternity of God. For this Church (we do believe,) was begun *for the same reason that God has a Church in the world, viz.: for the glory of God, in the salvation of souls by Jesus Christ, who “came into the world to save sinners.”* Its formation constituted an era in the history of the parent Church. This city will never be able to screen itself from its power—eternity will teem with its results. Is it not a tremendous thought for us all, that it will have to do with the Christianity of generations yet to come—with the destinies of thousands of souls—and with the triumphs of the Redeemer? From these four walls there may yet go forth some future Martin, or Judson, or Abeel, to bear its messages to idolatrous nations. Some new Nettleton,

or Whitefield, may here arise, and start out to electrify the Churches with their melting eloquence, and make another era of revivals: or some Harlan Page—bearing no commission save that of his burning zeal—yet, unobtrusively gathering hundreds of souls into the kingdom, as a shepherd folds his flock.

In fine, the truths, agencies, powers, object and end of this Church, are one with those of the Church Universal. It was formed for purposes as precious as redemption. Brethren and friends, do we realize beneath this humble roof, and in this small body of believers, these high distinctions? If you startle at the suggestion, let me ask you, is it more wonderful, than, that the Babe of Bethlehem had only a manger for his cradle? Oh! let us break out of this chilling skepticism. Let us view the Church—our own Church—from above, and not from below: from Calvary, and not from “the money-changers’ tables;” from the Judgment-seat, and from our promised thrones!—not from our farms, and our merchandise. And then we shall be able to attach the importance, that is due to every

new effort like this, to promote the cause of Christ.

Here, then, we stand, looking back to the solemn beginning of this Church. We contrast its infantile size and strength with its divine immunities; we measure its importance by the scale of the Cross, and the issues of the eternal world. Our eager eyes flash from this house, to the temple made without hands; from this worship, to that unwearying service; from this quiet band of living believers, to the awful wonders of the resurrection morning. And like Samuel, we would devoutly raise our memorial of praise, and say: "*Hitherto,*"—*in and from the very inception and formation of this Church*—"hath the Lord helped us;" and to him be the glory and praise forever and ever.

II. We are called upon, this day, to erect our memorial *in devout acknowledgment* of our *entire dependence* upon God, as our *Helper*. The true meaning of the pillar which Samuel consecrated between Mizpeh and Shen, was designed to give God all the glory, and to recognize, publicly and piously, their Divine deliverance from their enemies.

It is no strange thing for God's Church to be in trouble ; she has always lived with the Philistines upon her borders. If outward foes come ever to a truce, corruption is always working within. Achans in the camp, and Pharisees in the temple, are no less her plagues, than uncircumcised Philistines on her frontiers. "Unreasonable and wicked men" may vex her ; Providence may hedge up her way. She is often placed, like Israel, with the sea before her, and the Egyptians behind her ; and then, when cast helpless upon God, he makes her to pass over on dry ground. Ecclesiastical history is a register of conflicts, of heresies and controversies, of persecutions and disasters, intermingled with victories and blessings. But mainly, it presents the dark side of the picture. Passing over these generalities, let me remark, specifically, that *direct efforts to plant and extend the Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ*, are often attended by emergencies that are peculiarly trying, and not easily anticipated. Even the apostles, were not always successful in their efforts to establish Churches in Asia and Greece, and elsewhere. Where success

has crowned the blessed experiment, it has not seldom been like a victory on a bloody field. God does not give the harvest, or even cause the grain to spring up, until the field has been torn up and laid open by the ploughshare of a stern and salutary discipline. On this point, let me speak from personal experience; if I may do so without egotism.

In the providence of God, three new Church enterprises have been entrusted to my unworthy ministry. In the organization of a fourth, he has permitted me to bear the principal part. In each case the process has been the same—the circumstances only have differed. Smallness of numbers, scanty resources, dependence on others, trembling hopes, embarrassments, struggles and pauses, and then struggles again, as for life itself; dark days and sinking hearts: these were our experiences. And then, what could we do, but “stand still and see the salvation of God?” What, but watch the cloudy pillar above us—move when it moved, and stop when it stopped? But neither was it all darkness. While we rested in their shadows, the “mountains” that before our great “Zerubbabel,” were to



“become a plain,” were already tipped with the morning glories of the eastern sky. Then hope, and faith, and gladness drove away despondency, unbelief, and disquietude. And as Providence marched, we followed in its train—exclaiming, “*Who hath despised the day of small things?*”

Amid all these vicissitudes, in every case, I can truly say, that never was there room for one faltering thought, as to the final issue. Because, in every instance, those who composed these Churches, had begun their work in faith and prayer, with large views of their responsibilities; and for Jesus’ sake, they cast themselves and their precious charge implicitly upon the providence and grace of God. When did he fail them? True, he tried them; but that was in his love to them, and to test their faith and love towards him.

There these churches stand, flourishing and beneficent—blessings to the communities in which they are located; two of them already parental Churches, and all “growing in favour with God and man.” “Hitherto hath the Lord helped” them. And each of

them has a history, which may illustrate the eloquent language of another: "God's way is in the sanctuary. Every stone of it seems wrought into a pavement of that way; every altar is a pillar, that shows its course; and every sound is as the sound of his footsteps, as he goes forward, in its awfulness."

III. The memorial which we this day raise, *is full of hope for the future.* But hope in such cases becomes vigorous, just in proportion to the direct influence of trial in bringing out our latent powers and graces. John Angell James has well said, "*that every Christian has a greater amount of moral power than he suspects.*" Nothing proves this more than some great emergency. Take, for instance, the case of an infant Church. Its felt responsibilities awaken the slumbering energies, and by the grace of God, develope qualities of character, personal and social, natural and sanctified, which, in themselves, are like "armour on the right hand and on the left." Sailors and soldiers learn their arts amid the perils of tempest and of battle, in the severities of their discipline. "The Captain of our salvation" thus calls out all the



fortitude and courage of his soldiers, by arduous service; and no hope is so bright and sure as theirs, whose experience has taught them what it is to “hope against hope,” and “through much tribulation to enter the kingdom of God.”

Do you talk of difficulties? What are these to those whose prayers may move the arm of Omnipotence, whose religious history is illumined by triumphs over obstacles, high as the throne of Satan, who belong to a Church, bought with the blood of Jesus, and founded on the perpetuity of His Father’s word and throne? Do enemies mock you? Let some miserable Sanballat, watching and hating the Jews, who are at work upon Jerusalem’s fallen walls, exclaim, “What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?” Let Tobias, the Ammonite, sneer out his contempt: “Even that which they build, if a fox go up he shall break down their stone wall!” Let the indifferent, and discouraging and unbelieving observer, lift up his soft hands and declare,

“If the Lord should make windows in heaven, then might this thing be?” My brethren, if any infant church is founded in the strength of the principles which we have declared to you as the only true foundation of a Christian Church, then “God WILL make windows in heaven,” rather than that this thing should not be. Like the Temple of old, it may be built amid difficulties, necessary alike for the trial of faith, and the brighter exhibition of the glory of God. It demands patience, labour, zeal, self-sacrifice, trust in God, and above all, that high consciousness of the magnitude, and solemnity, and imperiousness of the enterprise, which Nehemiah felt, when, rejecting the advances of his foes, he exclaimed “I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down.” A spirit like this is preëminently and necessarily a hopeful spirit, drawing its aliment from the past, with its troubles and conquests, and from “THE ETERNAL” with His promises, and love, and power.

You may often have wondered at what we may call *the tenacity of life in a Church*. Here is a little society of believers, struggling from year to year, sacrificing time, ease,

money, strength and labour, always under a cloud, and often in distress, until at last light breaks through the darkened sky, and the desire of their hearts is fully accomplished. Then the "little one becomes a thousand," and unborn generations shall call it blessed. The world looks on, and wonders what held them together. "The Churches of Christ salute" her, and say "Lo! what hath God wrought!" Or, take another view. Here is a Church established centuries ago, coeval with the settlement of the country. In the meantime there have been wars and revolutions, commercial revulsions that have scattered her wealth, intestine troubles that have rent the body of Christ. Her pastors' graves lie under the shadow of their holy house, with those of successive congregations to whom they "preached Christ, and him crucified." Time and death have done their work on every thing else, but the church still lives to bless the children, as it blessed their fathers. Finally, review the history of the Church Universal—a bush burning and yet "not consumed"—a rock amid the billows—the *Church* vital with the life of Christ, and of the indwelling Spirit,

exhibiting substantially the same form, embodying the same eternal principles, echoing the same voices which resounded through the astonished world in her primitive days—the *Church*, older than empires, stronger than armies, mightier than thrones—the survivor of all her foes, the immortal witness to His truth, the great Teacher of the world, the Heir of all God's promises, the only society, institution, or "kingdom, that shall never be moved."

One thing alone can explain the wonder we are contemplating: *The life of the Church is the life of Christianity itself.* And you see exemplified, on a small scale, in the history of the little village, or forest, or city Church, the working of the same principles which astonish the universe in this more than miraculous preservation and triumphal progress of the Church Universal.

These are the assurances of our hope this day, while we set up our Stone of Help, and from the past look out into the unknown future.

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## GENERAL HISTORY.

THE history of the efforts which have been made from time to time, to plant and spread the Reformed Dutch Church in the State of Pennsylvania, is properly preceded by the fact, that from a very early period in the last century, the German Churches of this, and other Northern States, were supplied with ministers from Germany, through the Classis of Amsterdam, in Holland, and the Churches of our order in New York. Particular attention had always been paid by that Classis of the mother-land to the support of destitute and feeble Churches in foreign countries. During a long period of time, both the German Churches of Pennsylvania, and those of our own denomination, were thus supplied with a well-educated ministry, trained and ordained in Holland. It was mainly for this reason—zeal for a thoroughly-learned ministry—that the American branch of our Church was obliged to depend so long for pastors and teachers upon the

ecclesiastical authorities in the Netherlands. And it is worthy of note, that a fund for defraying the expenses of the *German* ministers to Holland, and their subsequent voyage to America, had been long placed at the disposal of the Classis, and very faithfully applied.

In April, 1738, delegates (the Rev. J. Bohm, and an elder named Snyder,) from a Church in this city, sat in one of our ecclesiastical assemblies in the city of New York. This union was continued until "only by the difference of language," it was severed in 1745.

The First Reformed Dutch Church of this city, originally composed of members of the German Reformed Church in Race street, who had left that connection for the sake of enjoying services in the English language, under the name of the "Second Reformed Association," began to worship in the early part of 1809, in the Hall of the Old Academy, Fourth street, below Arch. For several months they enjoyed the temporary service of that excellent man and devoted minister, the REV. JOSEPH EASTBURN, (commonly



known as "Father Eastburn," and celebrated for his successful labours among seamen.) The congregation increased under his ministry. In December, 1809, the Rev. James K. Burch, a Presbyterian clergyman, from North Carolina, began to labour among them as a missionary, and continued his services until April, 1813, with some degree of success. The corner-stone of the edifice in Crown street, was laid by him, May 28th, 1810. The dedication took place June 28th, 1811. On the 14th day of April, 1813, the congregation, at a meeting held for the purpose, unanimously agreed to form a connection with the Reformed Dutch Church.

The necessary steps were taken before the Classis of New Brunswick, by whose appointment the venerable Professor of our Theological Seminary, the Rev. John H. Livingston, D. D., presided at the organization, and preached the sermon on that occasion. The Rev. Mr. (afterwards Professor,) Schureman, was also on the committee with Dr. Livingston.

The first pastor of this new and important enterprise, was the REV. DR. JACOB BRODHEAD, who was called from the ministry of the Col-

legiate Church, in the city of New York. His first sermon as pastor of the Crown Street Church, was preached September 19th, 1813, from Romans i. 16: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." His installation took place on Sabbath, October 10th, of that year, and on the same evening, he preached his Introductory Discourse, (which was afterwards published,) from 2 Cor. xii. 14: "I seek not yours, but you." A paragraph in the memoranda of his first services, furnishes the key-note of the faithful ministry which he then began. It is this:—"I feel all the responsibility of a pastor—a new Church and a new people—much to do to get things in order:—trembling for the issue! What can I do, but go to that Throne of Grace, to which I have often resorted, and found help? \* \* \* I trust 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ,' but that to preach it in its plainness, will be the business of my life." And so he did, until, full of years and honours, and crowned with unusual ministerial success, like a shock of corn, fully ripe, "he was gathered in." During the thirteen years of his ministry in the Crown Street Church, five



hundred and sixty-seven persons were added to its communion; of whom, four hundred and eighty-three were received, on profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus; being an average of nine at each communion, or thirty-seven in each year. Besides these, it is well known, that of the crowds who thronged his Church, many were converted through his instrumentality, who connected themselves with Churches of other denominations. How fully did such facts justify one of the reasons which induced him to leave one of the most conspicuous pulpits of the land, to take charge of an infant enterprise in a strange city, in which, both the preacher and his denomination had yet to gain a foothold. That reason was this: "To decline their call, might be pernicious to that Church, whereas, my place here, I believe, can be supplied without much inconvenience or difficulty." Surely, God did honour that pious decision. To those of you who sat under his faithful ministry, I need utter no word in its commendation; but I must be allowed here to bear my testimony, that as a pastor, and as a citizen of Philadelphia, I have almost weekly traced the

footsteps of that beloved man of God ; and that, although more than a quarter of a century has elapsed since he removed from this city, yet his name is fragrant, and his praise is in all the Churches : and, best of all, while he “rests from his labours,” his “works do follow him.” Dr. Brodhead died June 6th, 1855, at the venerable age of seventy-three years. “Devout men carried him to his burial,” and thousands mourned his loss, who yet rejoiced that our beloved father had gone so peacefully and joyfully to his heavenly home.

The immediate successor of Dr. Brodhead in the Crown Street Church, was the Rev. DR. GILBERT R. LIVINGSTON, who began his labours there in November, 1826. Eight years afterwards, in March, 1834, at the age of forty-seven years, this ardent and laborious servant of Christ slept in Jesus. His powerful frame sank under the severity of an excruciating disease, but his sick room and his dying scene were “privileged beyond the common walks of men.” One of these occasions was described by his elders, as almost like the scene of the Transfiguration. From thence he wrote and sent his last messages to

his people, and friends, and Sabbath School. And there he left the brightest testimony to his faith in Jesus, and to the supporting grace which bore him through the bitter agonies of that mortal strife. Three hundred and twenty persons were received into the communion of the Church during his ministry, of whom only thirty-two were admitted from other Churches; the rest (two hundred and eighty-eight,) were the seals of his ministry.

Dr. Livingston was succeeded by the Rev. GEORGE W. BETHUNE, in the year 1834, whose connection with Crown Street Church was dissolved in 1836, in order to his assuming the charge of the colony which constituted this, the Third Reformed Dutch Church. The subsequent pastors of the Parent Church have been the Rev. James B. Hardenbergh, D. D., the Rev. C. C. Van Arsdalen, D. D., who deceased in 1856; and the present popular and excellent incumbent, the Rev. Alphonso A. Willits, who assumed his pastoral relation in 1849.

Dr. Hardenbergh's ministry extended from 1836 to 1840, and was largely blessed, to the salvation of souls, and "the edification of the

body of Christ." During this brief period, one hundred and thirty-five persons were added to the communion of that Church by profession, and seventy-five by certificate. Dr. Hardenbergh left Philadelphia to assume the charge of the then "Franklin Street Church," in New York city, now known as the "North-west Reformed Dutch Church," located in Twenty-third Street. Under Dr. Van Arsdalen's ministry of eight years, one hundred and twenty-five were added to the Church, and two hundred and fifty-one names have swelled the register since the Rev. Mr. Willits began his labours in 1849. In the mean time many changes have been wrought; the old and spacious edifice in Crown street, has given way to the more elegant structure, at the corner of Spring Garden and Seventh streets. And, although many of the revered, the useful and the good, of the old congregation have passed away, the children have taken the place of the fathers, and the Sabbath throngs, and the revived prosperity of the Church, attest the vigorous life and the thrifty growth of the good old vine. Long

may it flourish, a vine of the Lord's own right hand planting.

On summing up the aggregate membership, in full communion, of this our Parent Church, I find reported during the forty-three years of its history, the large number, of fifteen hundred and six persons, of whom more than eleven hundred were received from the world. Taken in connection with its several offshoots, the reported arithmetical results of the movement for its formation, must reach about three thousand souls in communion. But who can measure those other unseen spiritual and eternal influences which have ceaselessly flowed from this once little beginning of a Christian Church? Brethren, what lessons do we learn from such simple facts as these, and what celestial voices bid us go forward? And this Church is but one of myriads, in our own and other Gospel lands, of which we may say, as David did of the heavens and of the firmament: they "declare the glory of God, and show his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language

where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out unto all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world." (Ps. xix. 1-4.)

During the ministry of Rev. Dr. Brodhead, another Reformed Dutch Church was organized. The Church was principally composed of English Independents, and was originally known as the Independent Tabernacle. The building was located in Ranstead Court. As a Reformed Dutch Church, it was for a short time under the charge of the Rev. David Parker, who is said to have been an able and eloquent divine. But difficulties arose, which resulted in the separation of pastor and people, and in the transfer of this Church to the Presbyterian denomination. It took the name, by which it has ever since been known, of the "Seventh Presbyterian Church." As such, it is one of our near neighbours, both geographically and ecclesiastically. Its last pastor, was the Rev. E. P. Rogers, D.D., who has recently left it, to assume the important charge of the North Reformed Dutch Church, in the city of Albany, N. Y.

At a subsequent period, through the agency of Dr. Brodhead, another Church was formed



from this overflowing congregation, in the then *District of Spring Garden*; the building being located on Eighth Street. The first pastor of this Church was the late Rev. BROGUN HOFF, a brother beloved, and a fearless, resolute, sincere, affectionate, earnest, and faithful minister of Jesus. Mr. Hoff's ministry in Philadelphia, extended from October, 1818, till April, 1824, when he accepted a call from the large and important Presbyterian Church at Bridgeton, N. J. Subsequently he returned to the Church of his fathers, and after thirty-eight years of faithful service, in the sixty-second year of his age, he was very suddenly called to close his career, in December, 1856, being at the time of his death, pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church, in Germantown, N. Y. His bereaved family are now worshippers with us. To him succeeded the Rev. JACOB C. SEARS, (from 1826 to September, 1833,) who is still an eminent and successful pastor of an important congregation, (Six Mile Run, N. J.,) which he has served for a score and more of years. The Rev. Amzi Babbit, since deceased, followed Dr. Sears; and the Rev. Dr. John Gosman, was the last

pastor of this Church. Dr. Gosman still survives, one of our aged clergy, but yet pursuing his eloquent and distinguished ministerial career. After his departure, the congregation disbanded. The location of the building was unfortunate, and it was ultimately sold to another denomination of Christians.

The Reformed Dutch Church, at *Manayunk*, was organized in 1829, through the influence of the Rev. Dr. Sears, and a few members of his Church who resided there. For several years this faithful minister gratuitously maintained the services of this infant Church, preaching there, seven miles distant, in the afternoon, and for his own people in the morning and evening of each Sabbath. A church so sustained in infancy ought to live; and I am happy to add, that after many trials it is now enjoying a greater measure of prosperity than at any previous period of its history. The ministers of this Church have been, Rev. CORNELIUS VAN CLEEF, who served it as a missionary, Rev. S. A. BUMSTEAD, Rev. R. A. QUIN, Rev. E. G. LITTLE, Rev. CORNELIUS GATES, and Rev. WILLIAM FULTON, the present most useful incumbent.



A small Church at *Roxborough*, was for several years connected with that at *Manayunk*, and served by the same pastor; but it has since (in 1854) attached itself to the Presbyterian denomination.

On the 14th March, 1852, the Rev. JOSEPH F. BERG, D. D., who had for fifteen years been the pastor of the German Reformed Church in Race street, in this city, in a sermon (since published) publicly announced his decision to leave that connection and to unite with the Reformed Dutch Church. The occasion of this important movement was "the Romanizing tendency" of some of the leading divines, and of the Professors of Theology of the German Reformed Church; and the "practical avowal of sympathy with (these) views, by the Synod" of that denomination.\*

A large body of families and communicants uniting with their pastor in this action, they immediately sought the relationship which they now hold. Having assumed the title of the Second Reformed Dutch Church, of Phila-

\*See Dr. Berg's "Farewell Words" to the First German Reformed Church, in Race street.

delphia, they received from the surviving Trustees, the funds, amounting to about \$5000, which had for years been accumulating from the net proceeds of the sale of the defunct Spring Garden Church. Going out from their ancient Church, for conscience' sake, and almost like Abraham, not knowing whither, the God of the Patriarch has richly blessed them. Their large and stately house of worship (located in Seventh Street, above Brown,) is well filled with a prosperous congregation; and pastor and people are exerting a commanding influence for the cause of Christ. It is a pleasure to add, that during the past few weeks they have, by a liberal subscription, swept off the remnant of their debt, amounting to \$13,000; thus setting an example of successful, persevering and self-denying effort, which many of our churches are but too slow to follow.

Peculiar difficulties have hitherto prevented the rapid growth of the Reformed Dutch Church, in Philadelphia. We need not dwell upon these. At present she occupies a higher vantage ground than at any previous period of her existence, and she possesses resources

which ought to make her a most useful Church. What other branches may shoot out from these different vines, we know not. But we do know that growth is the law of the kingdoms of nature and of grace. When growth stops, decay begins. Self-preservation, therefore, must compel every church to extend its influences on every side—to “lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes,” and to break out on the right hand and on the left, in deeds of holy activity for the Master’s sake. Stand still, we dare not, at our peril. Forward then, forward! every Christian, and every Church, until “the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.” In love to other brethren, and for the salvation of souls, let us occupy the field in which Providence has placed us. There is room and work enough for all, in making aggressions upon the kingdom of darkness. We have no time nor strength to waste upon sectarian disputes, while souls are perishing for lack of knowledge, and while God, by His Providence and grace, is more loudly than ever bidding us, “Go forward!”

HISTORY OF THE THIRD REFORMED DUTCH  
CHURCH.

HAVING thus briefly sketched the history of other efforts to establish and spread the principles of the Church of our fathers, and of our adoption, in this city, I turn to that of our own beloved organization, with feelings of peculiar interest. It is very satisfactory to find that the records of this Church have preserved the facts and circumstances of its early history, with a minuteness which must be most pleasant to those who were actors in the scenes, and equally interesting to those of us who came afterwards. From these I shall quote what is appropriate, and add from other sources what is necessary to fill up the narrative.

“Some time in the year of our Lord, 1835, it occurred to the minds of one or two of the members of the Reformed Dutch Church in Crown street, at that time under the pastoral charge of Rev. George W. Bethune, that a favorable opportunity presented itself of establishing another Church in a more central part of the city, and thus of enlarging the

bounds of our beloved denomination. On consultation with others of their associates in the congregation, the plan was highly approved of. Mr. Bethune declared himself not only convinced of the propriety of the measure, but willing to assume the charge of the enterprise, or retain the charge of the original Church, as Providence should direct to be best. Nothing decided, however, was done until after a meeting at the house of Frederick Gaul, Esq., in the month of June. A subscription was opened, which, with the liberal promises of a thousand dollars from the Hon. Stephen Van Renssellaer, of Albany, and a thousand dollars from Andrew D. Cash, Esq., of the Episcopal Church, (promises fully redeemed,) was as follows: [Here follow the names of the contributors.] The total amount subscribed was \$16,150, in sums ranging from \$2000 to \$400, from eighteen individuals.

“Many causes operated to delay the prosecution of the enterprise, such as the difficulty of procuring a lot, and some lingering doubts of the success of the undertaking, until, on the seventeenth of December, 1835, at a meeting held at the house of Mr. Bethune, it was

solemnly, and with prayer for God's help, resolved instantly to commence the building of a house for God, on the lot at the corner of Tenth and Filbert streets. The corner-stone was laid, with appropriate services, 'on the third day of May, 1836.'"

From the Report of the Committee respecting this transaction, I quote these interesting statements, which will doubtless revive many tender recollections:—"After the corner-stone had been adjusted, the Rev. Mr. Bethune read the Psalm 'Before Jehovah's awful Throne,' which was sung, with good effect, by the company, to the tune of 'Old Hundred.' The Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer, of Albany, then descended into the opening at the Northeast end of the lot, and taking the mallet, he struck the stone three times, saying, 'I lay this corner-stone in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—one God.' The Rev. Dr. Ludlow, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, delivered an address. We listened with delight to the strain of Christian eloquence which distinguished the remarks. No root of bitterness mingled in the delightful offering. So much love to man-



kind pervaded the address, that every Christian present, whatever may have been the shades of difference in his creed, must have felt that it was good to be there. The Rev. Mr. Bethune stated the reasons which moved the persons active in the erection of this Church. No spirit of rivalry moved them; they came away in peace, and left their friends and former co-worshippers in the communion of the kindest feelings."

In the corner-stone were deposited a Bible, copies of the books of the Church, of the newspapers of the day, and a scroll containing an account of the enterprise, with the names of the contributors, officers, building-committee, architect, contractors, &c. On that scroll is written this testimony:—The enterprise has been commenced "by Elisha Wells, Andrew Adams, Elizabeth Spohn, George W. Morris, Geo. W. Bethune, John Garrison, Frederick Gaul, Peter Hertzog, Peter Fritz, J. L. Stellwagon, Geo. W. Mentz, Michael Reed, James Peters, Wm. G. Mentz, A. W. Adams, Wm. Rovoudt, Joseph Shantz, Henry H. Reed, and Michael Koons, of the Crown street congregation, not in the spirit of schism, nor in

discontent, but with the hope of extending the unity of our beloved Church and the kingdom of Christ, which is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. ‘Oh! Lord do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion. Build Thou the walls of Jerusalem.’ (Psalm li. 18.)

“‘The Lord is our memorial.’ (Hosea, xii. 5.)—*Amen.*”

And now, brethren and friends, after the lapse of more than twenty-one years, since the inception of this enterprise, we can, I trust, repeat those closing words, “The Lord is our memorial,” and we can bear witness that the principles thus avowed on earth and sealed in heaven, have always marked the history of this Church and congregation. True to our own Church relationship, no sectarian bigotry, no stormy agitation, no conflict among ourselves or with brethren, have ever marred our ministry or membership. Our Divine Lord and Master has set his own approving seal upon the enterprise which then and thus took its origin, and began to swell the eternal influences of our common faith. Ever let



us hold fast "the unity of the Spirit, which is the bond of perfectness." Let us do *our own proper work*. God will bless us, and HE will be our most glorious memorial, now and forever more.

On Sabbath, June 25th, 1837, this edifice was solemnly dedicated to the worship of the Triune God, after the forms of the Reformed Dutch Church, in North America, by the Rev. George W. Bethune, who preached a sermon from Psalm xxvii. 4. Rev. Dr. Ludlow followed in the afternoon, and the Rev. James B. Hardenburgh, pastor of the Crown street Church, in the evening.

The Rev. Mr. Bethune having previously resigned his former charge, assumed, at the request of the congregation, the charge of the pulpit until time should be given for his formal institution to the pastoral office over them.

Up to this time, the enterprise had been carried on "by the contributors" alone. The Church itself was not formed until August 26th, 1837, when it was regularly organized by a committee of the Classis of Philadelphia, consisting of Rev. Dr. Ludlow, and Messrs. Bethune and Hardenburgh, under

the style and title of "The Third Reformed Dutch Church, of Philadelphia." *Twelve* families and *thirty-seven* communicants, formed the nucleus of this organization. In April, 1838, it is reported to Classis as having *fifty-five* families and *sixty-four* communicants. The first pastor, Rev. Geo. W. Bethune, was unanimously called, September 25th, 1837, and his installation took place October 29th, succeeding.

From that time to the present, the worship of God has been regularly maintained in this place, under the blessing of God. The ministry of Rev. Dr. Bethune terminated August 31st, 1849. Of the commanding and sanctified eloquence which has given him a place among the most distinguished pulpit orators of our country, of his abundant labours, and of his eminent usefulness, I need say nothing to those who enjoyed that faithful ministry of more than twelve years, in this house of God, and who rejoice with me, that although removed to another field, he is still an honoured and successful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with his spirit," and crown him with much

greater blessings, both in this world and in that which is to come.

The next pastor of this Church was the late Rev. HENRY G. LIVINGSTON, (a son of the late Rev. Dr. Gilbert R. Livingston, of the Crown street Church,) who was installed November 18th, 1849, and resigned his charge in June, 1854. In January 27th, 1855, some of us followed him to his early grave, in the thirty-fifth year of his age. Short as his ministry was in this Church, it was long enough to endear him to many hearts; and to develop those traits of a noble and sanctified character, both personal and ministerial, which, with his acknowledged talents and culture, will ever be synonymous with his beloved name. He came here, and he laboured under trying circumstances, and not a few discouragements, especially those which sprang from a constitution sapped by insidious disease, and much nearer than any of his friends supposed, to the 'narrow house.' You will remember how the sad news of his death palled upon our ears, and with what solemnity that event has sealed his ministry among you. "The Lord is his memorial."

After a vacancy of a few months, your present pastor was called in October, and installed on the first Sabbath evening in December, 1854 : the services on that occasion being rendered by Rev. Dr. Berg, who preached the sermon, and by Rev. Mr. Willets and Rev. Mr. Bumstead, who conducted the other exercises. Thus far the blessing of the great Head of the Church has cemented our happy union, as pastor and people, and we will "thank God and take courage."

Up to this time, the total number of persons added to our communion has been four hundred and seventeen, of whom two hundred and three were admitted on confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and two hundred and fourteen by certificate from other churches, of almost all evangelical denominations of Christians. Deducting the deaths and dismissions, the names of about three hundred are still on the register, as in regular communion. Of these, however, a number are not now residents in this city. Some, by reason of old age and feeble health, are not permitted to meet with us. A few attend other churches more convenient to their dwellings,

in distant parts of the city, who have not taken dismissals from us. The actual number of resident communicants is now about two hundred and fifty.

The ordinance of holy baptism, has been administered to two hundred and six persons, of whom fifty-six were adults, who thus made their public profession of faith. Of marriages by the pastors of this Church, one hundred and eight are recorded. It is to be regretted, that hitherto no general register of deaths has been kept with our other records—an omission, which, from this time forth will be remedied.

The principal *Sabbath-school* was begun September 10th, 1837; subsequently, an infant department was added, and a school for colored persons was organized in 1839, which, for several years, was in a flourishing state. It is to be regretted, that this agency for good, in connection with this Church, no longer exists. The other schools have always been, as they should be, under the care of the Consistory, as well as of the Sabbath-school Association of the Church. For it is an essential principle of our theology, and

of our Presbyterian system, to look after, and to nurture the children and youth. And just as this principle is carried out, or neglected, the Churches will increase, or lose their power. A full return to primitive faith and practice, in the good old methods of family and pastoral instruction, joined with the approved advantages of modern experience in the training of youth, will do more to promote the interests of the young, and through them, of the Church and the world, than all the machinery which wit can invent and speculative people can use, for attracting audiences and building up Churches. Our hope, brethren and friends, is in the young. If we do not train them, and secure their attachment to the Church of our love, rely upon it, that others will. I think that the history of our own Sabbath-schools will fully sustain these assertions. Let us throw ourselves into them, and surround and fill them with influences which shall make them more than ever feeders to the Church, the sources of large supply to her membership, and of active usefulness in all the departments of congregational interest. If we do this, we



know that, as water from a living spring, under the Divine blessing, it shall stream with bounty and benefits to our Churches, our country, and the world.

Among the first records of the Consistory, after the organization, I find two Resolutions, which indicate the place which has always been given to the spirit and calls of Christian liberality. Those Resolutions declare the expediency of forming an Education and a Missionary Society. Nor was this all; for by the same action, the Consistory pledged themselves to the entire support of a Beneficiary, who should be educated for the Gospel ministry; and also to aid in the support of Rev. Mr. Nevius and wife, missionaries on the island of Borneo, among the Dyaks. These societies subserved their purpose for a limited period, and then the stream of contributions flowed through other channels, both for denominational and general objects of Christian charity and usefulness. Reference is made to this subject in no boastful spirit, but with gratitude to God, aye, and with sorrow that we have done no more. Yet it did strike me as a pleasant and promising thing, that at the



very outset of an infant enterprise, and before almost any other business had been done, aside from the organization of the Church, such a record should appear. I mention it it again, to add, that it should always be one of our landmarks, and that we should never permit those who may come after us in this pulpit and in these pews, to say that we have dishonoured our precedents, and forsaken this high cause and standard. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, and that there may be meat in mine house; and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal. iii. 10.)

The formation, in October, 1855, and the unexpected degree of success of the "Scudder Missionary Society," composed principally of our children and youth, and the aid given through our Ladies' Society to another Beneficiary, are earnest of still greater measures of devotion to the great interests of Missions and the supply of the ministry, than we have ever yet attained unto. Let us see to it, that we never let this banner droop.

Since the organization of this Church, the office of Elder has been sustained by nine persons; the office of Deacon, by nineteen persons; and that of Trustee, by twenty-six persons.

This review of our little history would be incomplete, without some notices of other changes which are stamped upon its pages. Of the original number of communicants, ten are dead; eight have been dismissed to join other churches, and three have left the city, whose names are still on the register. Of those who first sustained the offices of the Church, four have deceased, whose liberality and zealous attachment to these sacred interests, deserve more than the passing tribute of this discourse.

First upon the record, is the name of ANDREW ADAMS, ESQ., who died June 30th, 1839—an amiable man, prompt, willing and efficient. He was a counsellor, friend and brother, beloved while living, and mourned when dead, by his associates in the Board of Trustees. He was one of the largest contributors to the erection of this building, and to all the benevolent and religious objects of liberality. In the welfare of this Church

he took a deep interest, and had his useful life been spared until the communion season succeeding his death, it was his cherished purpose, then to have professed that hope in Jesus, which he had enjoyed for some time previous. But God saw fit to take him to himself, and to the communion of "the spirits of the just made perfect."

In the month of January, 1842, another breach was made in the congregation, by the lamented death of one of its first friends, the venerable PETER HERTZOG, in the sixty-second year of his age. For several years, he was the President of the Board of Trustees, and a most liberal and useful friend of this Church. A man of great dignity of presence and character, a firm and honourable friend, benevolent in his impulses, and gentle in his deportment, his loss was severely felt. Unostentatious, and yet active in the counsels of the Board of Trustees, he was always ready to help, in every emergency, those interests which his associates knew to lie near his heart. Like his friend, Mr. Adams, he never made a public profession of religion, but intended doing so at the sacramental season,

which occurred only two weeks after his remains had been committed to the grave. He was a good man, and his memory is now most worthily associated with the Theological Seminary of our Church, by the erection of that much needed, capacious, and stately building, which is at once the local habitation of our "School of the Prophets," the monument to Mr. Hertzog's name, and to the enlightened munificence of that Christian lady, who, of all others, knew him best, and mourned him most, as her husband. Long may it stand, a blessing to the ministry, and to the Churches of our land and age.\*

Next upon the register of our lamented dead, stands the name of ELISHA WELLS. As a deacon, and afterwards an elder, and from the beginning of the Church, as a trustee, his record is most honourable and impressive. He is described, in the language of Dr. Be-

\* The "Peter Hertzog Theological Hall" was erected in 1856, at New Brunswick, New Jersey, through the liberality of Mrs. Anna Hertzog, whose generous donation of nearly \$32,000, has secured this commodious edifice to the General Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church.

thune, as “a beloved brother, and a faithful elder.” “He was the first who subscribed, and one of the largest donors, towards the building of this place of worship. He was equally zealous and devoted in building up the spiritual temple. He was a good man, and walked in the fear of the Lord, and did much good in the name of Jesus. His death was sudden, but neither alarming nor unwelcome to him; and his unshaken courage in passing through the dark valley, has given us another proof that Christ has taken the sting from death, and the victory from the grave.”

Since the settlement of your present pastor, we have buried one who was long an elder and active member of the Crown street Church, and during his latter years, a fellow-communicant with us: I refer to that venerable servant of God, Mr. FREDERICK ERRINGER, who died October 20th, 1855, in the eighty-third year of his age. He was the successor of the late Bishop White, as President of the First-day, or Sabbath-school Society, which was the precursor of the American Sunday School Union; an office which he held to the day of

his death, and to which he clung with the most youthful and pious fervor, that I ever knew to move the heart of an old man, of more than four-score years. It was my privilege often to visit him, and to witness the living power of that active and joyful faith, in the exercise of which he closed his death-dimmed eyes upon this world. He loved the Church—he venerated her principles and her history. He was often a useful delegate to her ecclesiastical assemblies. And next to her, he loved the children of the Church—aye, and children, wherever he could see them, and teach and bring them into the fold of the good Shepherd. And when I saw him die, I could not but feel that the memory of this just man was blessed. He was the friend of my fathers for three generations back; and as a son who would not forsake his own, nor his father's friend, I rejoice in this opportunity to pay a brief tribute, personal and pastoral, to one who, above all, was like Abraham, "the friend of God."

Time, and my limited knowledge of others of the worthy dead of this people, allow, at this time, the notice of but one more revered



and distinguished name, that shines like a quiet star upon our list of communicants.

This is the record: "THOMAS BUCHANAN, (Governor of Liberia,) admitted by certificate from Crown street Church, January 12th, 1838, died at Bassa, in Africa, September 3d, 1841, in the thirty-third year of his age."

This is not the place or time for a review of his remarkable career; but I cannot pass him by, without adverting to some facts which should embalm his memory in the inmost heart of this Church. He came from Utica to Philadelphia, with Dr. Bethune, with a view to preparation for the Gospel ministry. Soon after this Church was formed, he united with its communion by certificate, from the Crown street Church, and remained in it until he died, in that far-off land. His purpose of becoming a preacher of the Gospel, was providentially changed. Circumstances had thrown him into close connection with the Colonization Society of this State; and God soon showed that he had set him apart for another ministry. His friends had ample reason to prove that they were not mistaken,



when the weighty interests of the then infant colony in Liberia were entrusted to their youthful Secretary. Like the band of chosen men who went out with Saul, he was one "whose heart God had touched," and fitted for a great work. When on his first voyage to Africa to succor the distressed colonists, and to explore the field, in December, 1835, he thus wrote: "The God who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, can also temper the rays of a tropical sun to a Northern constitution. '*But, though he slay me; yet will I trust Him.*' The work is *His*, to which I go, and is worthy of all sacrifice." At another time, in a letter to a friend, he speaks of home scenes, and then exclaims: "Oh! that I might again enjoy the reality which these pleasing visions call up before me; but it may not be: I must struggle on in my solitude, in this far-away land, until I finish the work which is given me to do." And he did do that "*work*," with a zeal which consumed him, until shattered by disease, but sustained by a calm and sure trust in God, he "*finished*" it, and went up to receive his crown. His first visit to Africa, was as an agent of the New

York and Pennsylvania Colonization Societies, in 1835, to relieve the condition of the suffering colonists. Having discharged this duty, he returned to this country, and in 1838, was appointed Governor of Liberia. From the moment of his arrival in the colony, there is dated a new era in its history: for, with admirable wisdom and vigor, he laid anew, and broad and deep, the foundations of that now hopeful African Republic. He was everything to the colony—now leading her soldiers to battle and victory over savage tribes who had attacked them—now, by treaties with chieftains, by influence with our own Government, and by personal and heroic efforts, rescuing the wretched slaves from their fetters; and, to use his own language, “forgetful of all personal considerations, in his desire to destroy” this dreadful slave “traffic, accursed of God, and loathed by all good men.”\* Again, we see him at the helm

\* The following is the passage, quoted from one of his despatches to the Board, which may well be pondered by those who wish to see what would again be the result of the monstrous proposition, so boldly made, to revive this infamous traffic, and to cover it with the

of government over the colonists, "feared and respected by the natives," and resolutely, in the face of odium and all consequences, enforcing the laws of his feeble State upon citizens and foreigners alike, until he stamped upon the colony much of the dignity and honour of his own high and pure character, and made it a spectacle to the nations of the world. The death of such a man, was a severe blow to the infant Republic, and it created a deep sensation wherever it was known. The late Rev. Dr. Archibald Alexander thus wrote of him when he was living: "No one can read the despatches, or watch

stars and stripes: "My heart is sick with the daily exhibitions of my country's flag protecting this traffic, accursed of God, and loathed by all good men. Could you see, as I see, the multiplied miseries which it is daily inflicting on this unhappy land, like me, you would *forget all personal considerations* in your desire to destroy it. But I cannot tell you the ten-thousandth part of the evil: fire, famine, blood, and chains, are the necessary elements of the slave trade; and every conceivable combination of these elements is daily produced in this wretched land. Oh! my country—my country!—how enormous is thy guilt in this matter!—how great thy debt to injured Africa!"

the measures of Governor Buchanan, without feeling at once that he beholds the evidences of a truly great and remarkable character.”— (History of African Colonization, p. 572.) And after hearing of his death, he wrote: “I do not know when you will be able to supply his place. He was a man of commanding talents, and admirable decision and courage.” And that eminent statesman, the late Roger M. Sherman, declared, in a letter to the Society: “He was not only eminently qualified for the station which he held, but equally so, for the highest duties, civil or military, which any nation could require. All his words and actions were marked with wisdom, integrity, and dignity. His talents, like those of Washington, were adapted to every exigency; and to accomplish the greatest good, was his constant and controlling principle.”

Amid his arduous and self-denying duties, he did not forget the Church of his love and of his vows. Many of you may recollect a letter which he wrote to the members of this Church, in which he pleaded like an apostle for that injured race to which he devoted his precious life. And if any think that I am

dwelling too long and too ardently over the memories of this young servant of Christ, my answer must be in the concluding sentences of that warm appeal. Hear him: "I will add another claim upon your prayerful interest, in behalf of my poor savage, dying neighbours. *You have a brother here*—one whose name is recorded with yours; whose hopes and whose home are with you; who loves you, and prays for you. He beseeches, in all earnestness, that your supplications may ascend for the salvation of this wretched people, for whose welfare he has come out from the pleasant scenes of his native land, and the sweet society of Christian friends. And now, farewell! May God in his infinite mercy guard you, and guide and preserve you long on the earth, to advance his cause. Again, farewell; and should we never meet, till

"Above, ne'er to part, but forever to dwell

With the MASTER in glory—till then, Oh! farewell."

Brethren and friends, this was our *brother*; a light from our own altars. His

body sleeps beneath the shade of some tall palm trees, near the Government House, at Bassa. His memoir has yet to be written; and shall I add, that no marble marks the sacred spot! (although I have learned that provision is now being made for a suitable monument.) But, in the language of one of his Liberian friends: "While the green turf flourishes, and the south sea-breezes spread the perfumes of flowers planted on the spot sacred to his ashes, may his memory abide in the heart of every Liberian, and his praises diffuse a sacred love for his name in the home of every coloured man, to whose cause he was so wholly and ardently devoted." With the sainted Finley, and Alexander, and Mills, and Ashmun, and other great and good friends of this cause of God and humanity, the memory of Thomas Buchanan will forever be united with the sufferings, the slavery, and the regeneration and millennial freedom of that teeming race and mysterious continent. Without boasting, but in humble thankfulness, I desire to glory "after a godly sort," that this bright name adorns the registers of our own beloved Church.



Next to the power of its pulpit in the past, and in some respects beyond it, (although it may be said to be really a legitimate part of its influence upon this, our fellow-communicant,) this Church has sent forth no agency so commanding and enduring, so world-wide in its reach, as that of this sanctified, eminently useful, and heroic young man. Let us imitate his piety, and strive to follow, though at so great a distance, and in other walks of life, his work, his patience, his valor, and his immortal victory. May God raise up from among us many, who, like him, shall be distinguished ornaments of the world, and pillars in his Church !

[Since the delivery of this discourse, death has made another serious inroad upon us, by taking away one who was, perhaps, more thoroughly identified with this Church than any other of its officers or members. Mr. GEORGE W. MORRIS, died on Sabbath evening, February 22d, 1857, aged 60 years. Converted, by the grace of God, under the ministry of Rev. Dr. Brodhead, in July, 1823, he connected himself with the communion of the Crown street Church, and for



several years he was a deacon, and afterwards an elder there. One of the founders of this Church, he served from its organization as elder, trustee, and treasurer, until he was removed from us by the hand of God. In the two churches, he bore the office of elder for nearly *twenty-six successive years*. During the long period of his connection with this Church, he was absent but twice from the meetings of the board of trustees, and I believe he was never absent from the usual quarterly meeting of the elders, previous to the communion season. The same faithfulness marked his attendance upon the Sabbath and weekly services of the Church. Nothing short of a necessity could keep him away from these sacred engagements. The active usefulness of such a man, during more than a score of years, is not easily measured; and his loss alone can teach us his value. His Christian character was symmetrical and strong. Naturally gentle, kind, considerate, firm in principle, sanguine, generous, and cheerful, ready in action, and zealous in perseverance—he combined many noble traits in an unusual degree. He was not a negative

character—but positive, earnest, and steady to his convictions. His piety partook largely of those natural features. He did nothing in religion to be seen of men; but his experience was broad and deep. He loved “the old paths” of truth and righteousness, and his example proved him a man of faith, and of works. Perhaps the best designation of his personal religion would be *its realizing power*. His eye seemed fixed upon the throne of God, and his heart upon his Saviour. “He endured as *seeing* Him who is *invisible*.” This was his habitual frame. Without any raptures or ecstasies, he enjoyed large measures of the assurance of faith. He had long regarded the great question of his existence as “*settled*” forever, and upon his dying bed he could say triumphantly, with Paul, “I know whom I have believed, and that He is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.” When asked, “What are your prospects? Where are you going?” he replied most earnestly, “*Why, where should I be going but to heaven? I could not go anywhere else.*” And so the good man died, calmly reposing upon Jesus: uttering with almost his

last breath, these sweet anticipations of "the glory to be revealed, 'Good thoughts, good thoughts!'"

Next to his Lord and Saviour, and to his family, his affections ran out towards this Church. So closely had he been identified with all its interests, from the beginning, that every stone, even of the outward house, seemed precious in his eyes. Nothing that concerned its welfare escaped his attention; and it must be acknowledged that his views generally controlled its policy. Opinions might differ as to his judgment in given cases, but none could ever doubt his purity of purpose and his pious zeal. His devotion to the spiritual house, fully justified the remark he made to me, during his last illness: "Oh! how I have loved that Church!" In reply to my suggestion referring to his own intimate relations to it, he added, "I never doubted its success. It was a great responsibility; but if I had not been there, God would have raised up others to take my place: He never wants for instruments. It was founded in many prayers—God will continue to take care of it, as He has always done." Faithful as

he was, *he* often regretted that he had “done so little for his Saviour,” and spake of himself as an “unprofitable servant.” Yet who among us has done more, or as much for Christ, as our departed friend? He mourned over his infirmities and sins, for he realized these as well as the hopes and comforts of grace. Yet how luminous was his Christian example to us all. The churches have few such elders and members to lose; and when they die, it becomes them to cherish their memories, to follow their good example, and by humble prayer, and increased faithfulness, to improve “the day of visitation” which removes such pillars from the house of God.]

#### CONCLUSION.

THUS, brethren, I have hastily reviewed the events, the results and the changes, of the first twenty-one years of the history of this Church enterprise.

Here, then, let us *set up our stone of help, and call the name of it Ebenezer, saying, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”* How wonderfully hath He helped us from the first

inception of the enterprise, in a private parlour, and from its small beginnings, through all this score of years. He hath helped us, when He put it into the hearts of his people to begin this great work. He hath helped us by raising up liberal and devoted friends, "men like a flock, and honourable women not a few," who have "borne the burden and heat of the day," amid all changes and trials. He hath helped us by sparing so many of these valuable lives during this long period—lives that have been and still are bound up with this Church, for our Saviour's sake—lives whose record is not yet made up, but whose memorials will not be less emphatic and delightful than those of the revered dead whom we have this day remembered with filial and Christian love. He hath helped us, by perpetuating the ministry of this Church, and by crowning that ministry with many of the choicest blessings of the Holy Ghost, in the conversion of sinners, and the sanctification and usefulness of believers. He hath helped us, by enabling us to maintain the most peaceful and coöperative relations with other Christian people and churches, and denominations.

He hath helped us to spread abroad the truth, by many means of usefulness, in private Christian life, and in our associated capacities. From our band of communicants, a chosen few are now preaching the word of life: some of them in very prominent stations, and all in spheres of active labour. I may mention the names of Rev. Dr. Enoch C. Wines, Professor in Washington College, Pa., Rev. Henry J. Van Dyck, of Brooklyn, and Rev. J. Halstead Carroll, of Jamesburg, N. J.

And now, as to all our good things, “by the grace of God we are what we are.” “The Lord is our memorial.”

As to the future—both the past and the present afford us good grounds for hope and effort. The formation of this Church was a public pledge to God, and to His Church, and to this great city, that they who composed it, and their successors, would stretch every nerve to give the gospel to as many as could be reached by its ministry, and by the various forms of sanctified Christian effort. It was a solemn pledge to the great Head of the Church, that we would lift the banner of His Cross, and never dishonour it—that we would

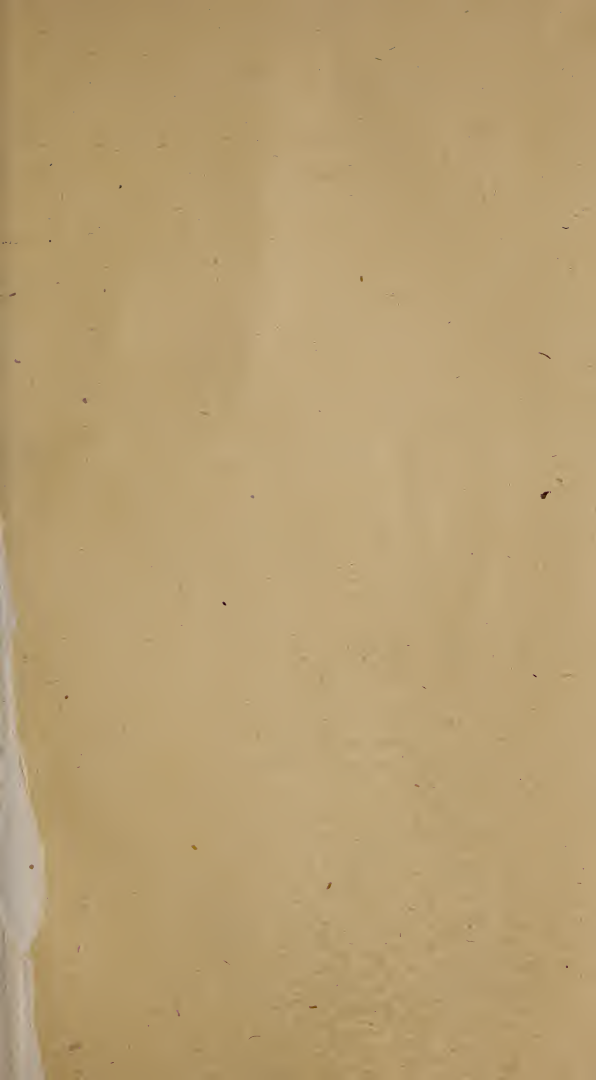


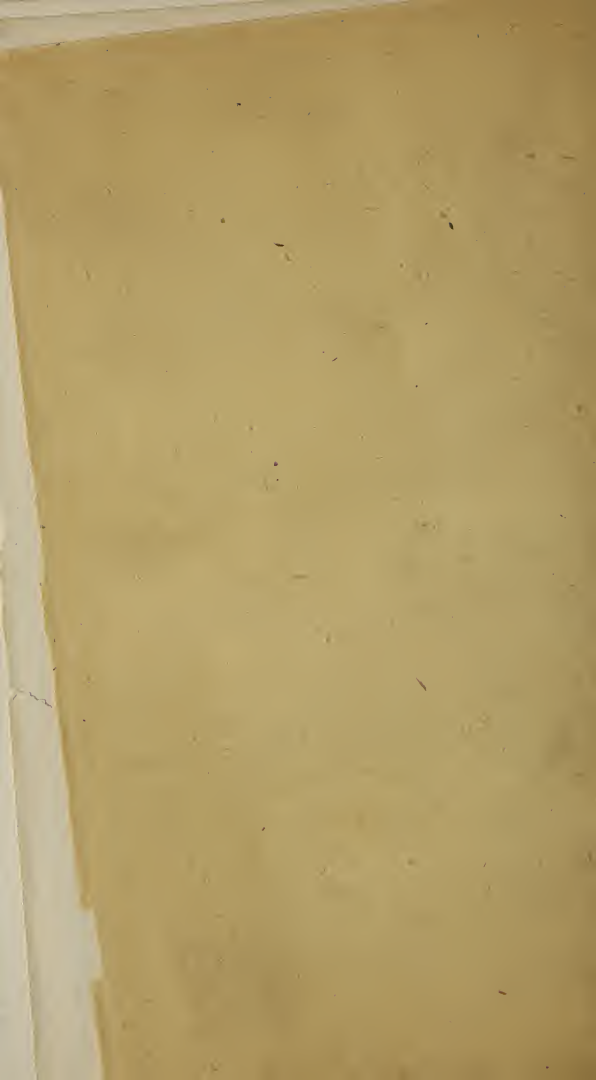
draw the sword for Him, and never sheathe it. How far this promise has been kept, the day of judgment will determine. But this I know, that we must be false to all our history, and faithless to the covenant blessings of our adorable Lord, and recreant to all our opportunities and obligations, and that we must dishonour the memories, and prayers, and labours of our sainted dead, if ever we shall cease, as a Church and congregation, to maintain and spread "the truth as in Jesus," the order of our worship, and our Christian fellowship with other followers of our Lord and Saviour. "The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places : yea, we have a goodly heritage." Let us love it and preserve it. Let us cultivate a noble home spirit, with generosity to "all the saints in Christ Jesus." Let us, if we can, remove obstacles, whatever they may be, whether temporal or spiritual. Let the inspiring associations of this service and of our past history, move us to the commencement of a new career. Let the memory of the self-denying efforts in which this Church originated, animate us to a higher standard of active piety and enlarged liberality.



Finally, let us act upon the motto of the apostolic John Eliot, "Faith and prayer will accomplish anything." Yes, brethren and friends, faith in God's power and willingness to do for us all that we need, faith in the principles of the blessed gospel to meet the spiritual and everlasting wants of immortal souls, faith in God's promise to give the Holy Ghost, and in "His Eternal Son," "by whose stripes we are healed," and through whom we shall have the victory. Let humble, importunate, earnest prayer, be the language of this faith. Give us these, and then "the zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform it." And when our race is run, and when this Church shall have finished its long history, the last survivors shall build the pillar, more enduring than stone, and shall "call it Ebenezer, and say, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." "To Him be glory, in the Church, world without end. Amen and Amen."











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